

(Washington, DC) Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Miramar) made the following remarks regarding the Republican sponsored H.R. 1255, the *Government Shutdown Prevention Act of 2011* .

This legislation would enact H.R. 1, the *Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011*

, into law if the Senate has not passed an appropriations measure by April 6, 2011. H.R. 1 was passed by the House of Representatives on February 19, 2011 by a vote of 235-189, but has not been passed by the Senate. A bill must pass both bodies in the same form and be signed by the President in order for it to become law. H.R. 1255 passed the House by a vote of 221 to 202 with one voting present.

"This is not only a gimmick and a waste of time but it is flat-out unconstitutional," said Hastings. "We all learned in grade school how a bill becomes a law, and to take from School House Rock's 'I'm Just a Bill': 'You sure gotta climb a lot of steps to get to this Capitol Building here in Washington.'

"But House Republicans are trying to circumvent these steps, and the Constitution, with this legislation," further noted Hastings. "It is insulting to the American people.

"Having this matter come to the House floor on this date gives new meaning to April Fools' Day. The American people, however, are no fools and when push comes to shove, this will be 'just a bill.'"

Congressman Alcee L. Hastings serves as Senior Member of the House Rules Committee, Ranking Democratic Member of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, and Democratic Chairman of the Florida Delegation.

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